

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5509

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E.O. 11652 : N/A

TAGS: FR, PINT, PGOV, PFOR

SUBJECT: FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING'S FIRE-
SIDE CHAT -- NEW YEAR'S EVE

SUMMARY: IN THE TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S EVE ADDRESS TO THE FRENCH NATION VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING CALLED 1974 A YEAR OF CIVIL LIBERTY IN FRANCE -- REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO SEVERAL OF HIS OWN REFORMS -- AND URGED THAT 1975 BE CONSIDERED A YEAR OF BROTHERHOOD, BY WHICH HE INTENDED TO MEAN ACTION IN FAVOR OF SOCIETY'S UN-FORTUNATES. HE MADE ONLY BRIEF COMMENT ON FOREIGN RELATIONS BY EXPRESSING HIS HOPE THAT FRANCE COULD BE-COME IN 1975 A COUNTRY CAPABLE OF PROPOSING CONCILIA-TION AND REALISM. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN POLICY: THE SINGLE PARAGRAPH OF GISCARD'S SPEECH WHICH DEALT WITH FOREIGN POLICY COULD HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY GENERAL DE GAULLE. SINCE THE ELECTION, GISCARD CLAIMED, "OUR COUNTRY HAS REAFFIRMED ITS PLACE AMONG THE NATIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE (SOLUTION OF) THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD." HE WENT ON TO HOPE THAT FRANCE WOULD CONTINUE TO EXPRESS TOLERANCE AND CONCILIATION IN ITS FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT IN THE "TORMENTED" WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE FRANCE COULD APPEAR AS A COUNTRY CAPABLE OF PROPOSING CONCILIATION AND

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REALISM TO OTHERS AS SOLUTIONS FOR THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS.

2. INTERNAL AFFAIRS: GISCARD MENTIONED, AS PARTICULAR PROBLEMS REQUIRING THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION, WORKING CONDITIONS AND PAY FOR THE NATION'S POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS AND FOR FRENCH HOSPITAL PERSONNEL. HE ALSO NOTED THAT A PARTICULAR EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO AID YOUNG JOBSEEKERS, THE AGED AND THE HANDICAPPED. IN ADDITION, HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF SPECIAL SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY HIT HARDEST BY INFLATION -- FARMERS AND THE SELF-EMPLOYED. HE WENT ON TO EXTEND SPECIAL NEW YEAR'S WISHES TO SEVERAL CATEGORIES OF THE FRENCH POPULATION NOT NORMALLY MENTIONED IN PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES: THE ANTILLAIS, WHO RECEIVED HIM SO WARMLY DURING THE MARTINIQUE SUMMIT; IMMIGRANT WORKERS WHO "LIVE AMONG US" AND WHO SHOULD "FEEL THEMSELVES AT HOME IN A FRENCH SOCIETY WHICH WELCOMES THEM" AND TO THE FRENCH PRISON POPULATION.

3. COPY OF GISCARD'S SPEECH IS BEING POUCHED TO EUR/WE.
RUSH

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